Comparison of the Yakemachi-type Pottery and Potteries from Southern Tochigi Prefecture

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The Yakemachi-type pottery is distributed mainly in the region of Nagano and Gunma prefectures. It has been said that Yakemachi-type pottery is not found in the area to the east of this region that lies in Tochigi Prefecture. However, one item of Yakemachi-type pottery has been excavated from the Teranohigashi Site located in the southern part of Tochigi Prefecture.

Pottery found in the southern part of Tochigi Prefecture where the Teranohigashi Site is located is classified according to the following phases. Atamadai type pottery comprises the bulk of the Atamadai-type II - III phase. The Atamadai-type IV phase is comprised of Atamadai-type IV pottery and a new type that emerged called the Nakabyou-type series of pottery. The Nakabyou-type series of pottery comprises the larger part of the first period of KasoriEI type pottery. A small quantity of the Atamadai-type series of pottery has been found together with KasoriEI-type pottery. It is interesting to note that the Daigi-type series of pottery that was the main type of pottery that existed in the northern to central parts of Tochigi Prefecture during this period has been excavated in only very small quantities. Yakemachi-type pottery from the Teranohigashi Site was not generated from the above-mentioned types of pottery. Therefore, it is pottery that was not made locally in that region. This pottery closely resembles Yakemachi type pottery from regions in both Nagano and Gunma Prefectures with respect to the pattern configurations, raised shapes and patterning techniques.

In contrast, a method of pottery decoration that filled the surface called "Kyokuryusenmon" that consisted of raised bands and the resulting depressed lines was popular over a wide area of Eastern Japan during the middle stage of Middle Jomon. Kaniyamada type pottery and Tenjinyama type pottery from Hokuriku, Kaen type pottery from Niigata and Yakemachi type pottery from Nagano and Gunma are some of the types of pottery that come under this category. Pottery resembling Kaen type pottery and Jyouhouji category pottery that was influenced by Kaen type pottery have been found in the area spanning from the Aizu region in Fukushima Prefecture through to the northern part of Tochigi Prefecture. These items of pottery are also decorated with "Kyokuryusenmon". As pottery that has been decorated with "Kyokuryusenmon", this pottery and Yakemachi type pottery from the Teranohigashi Site belong to the same group. However, the former were influenced by pottery from Niigata Prefecture and the Aizu region in Fukushima Prefecture while the latter were influenced by pottery from Gunma Prefecture and Nagano Prefecture. Strictly speaking, these two types of pottery have independent origins.